

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Mobile phones on the Underground
Objective	Understand current use of mobile phones on London Underground, explore support for system-wide introduction of mobile signal capability, and profile likely use if introduced.
Date	March 2010
Methodology	Six group discussions and 819 station exit interviews with LU users who own/use a mobile phone. Plus 1,000 telephone interviews with London residents aged 16+.

Key findings

- The great majority of LU customers own / use a mobile phone. Most LU customers (83%) have used, or wanted to use, a mobile phone at one time or another on the LU system. For most, (desired) use is frequent / recent.
- People are generally accepting of the current situation of not being able to use their mobile device at all times on LU. Some actively like this, e.g. not being able to be contacted, not being distracted by people's conversations.
- Use of mobiles on LU is more supported by customers (67%) than opposed (18%). Support among London residents has increased since 2007 (from 54% to 58%), and opposition has decreased (from 30% to 19%). Most don't have a strong desire for – or against – mobiles on LU.
- Customers recognise that 'if they can, they will'. Over three quarters - more than who support – say they would be likely to use a mobile device if they could. Almost all identify with at least one situation where they would use a mobile phone, particularly letting people know they might be late.
- Voice calls and text / SMS messages are the most likely communications used on mobiles if the service were available. Users envisage an initial flurry of voice calls, declining after a while when text messaging would become the most common communication method on the Underground.
- If mobiles can be used on LU, the service should be as normal to use as possible: signal available on all parts of the system; for all mobile networks; with no additional charges. As this is not a priority for customers, significant LU investment would be questioned and potentially strongly resisted.

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